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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/52/626/Add.2)*]

52/182. International trade and development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/95 and 50/98 of 20 December 1995 and 51/167 of 16 December 1996, as well as relevant international agreements concerning trade, economic growth, development and interrelated issues,

Emphasizing the importance of an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system,

Emphasizing also that a favourable and conducive international economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate are necessary for the economic growth of the world economy, including the creation of employment, in particular for the growth and development of the developing countries, and emphasizing further that each country is responsible for its own economic policies for sustainable development,

Taking note of agreed conclusions 1997/1 of the Economic and Social Council on the theme "Fostering an enabling environment for development: financial flows, including capital flows, investment and trade",[1]

Noting that the mid-term review of the outcome of the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development will be held in 1998,

Noting also that the second Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization will be held at Geneva from 18 to 20 May 1998,

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[1] A/52/3, chap. II. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3*.

I

1. *Reaffirms* the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development;

2. *Also reaffirms* its political will and responsibility with respect to implementing the agreed commitments reached at the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Midrand, South Africa, in particular the document entitled "A Partnership for Growth and Development",[2] and, in this regard, welcomes the convening of a special high-level mid-term review meeting in 1998, which will contribute to the preparations for the tenth session of the Conference, to be held in Thailand in 2000;

3. *Welcomes* the efforts by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to build a lasting partnership for development with non-governmental actors, including through the "Partners for Development" initiative, to be held at Lyon, France, in 1998;

4. *Takes note* of the reports and the agreed conclusions of the fifteenth executive session[3] and the forty-fourth session[4] of the Trade and Development Board, and notes the important contribution that the *Trade and Development Report, 1997*, the *World Investment Report* and the *Least Developed Countries, 1997 Report* make to the work of the Board;

5. *Notes* that the Trade and Development Board recommended that the General Assembly change the name of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Restrictive Business Practices to the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy and convene a fourth United Nations conference on the Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices, as well as a diplomatic conference to consider and adopt a convention on arrest of ships, endorses the aforementioned change of name of the Intergovernmental Group, and stresses that the two conferences, as agreed by the Board, should be absorbed within the budget level proposed by the Secretary-General for the biennium 1998-1999;

6. *Expresses its support* for the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to implement fully the far-reaching reforms embodied in the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference;

7. *Notes* that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development is making increasing use of information technology to enhance further its effectiveness, and urges the Conference to assist developing countries in fully benefiting from these new technologies;

8. *Also notes* the increasing importance and application of electronic commerce on international trade, and urges the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in cooperation with other relevant bodies of the United Nations system, to assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and in this regard further notes the needs of the countries with economies in transition;

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[2] *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Ninth Session, Midrand, Republic of South Africa, 27 April-11 May 1996, Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.II.D.4), part one, sect. A.

[3] See A/52/15 (Part I). For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 15*.

[4] See A/52/15 (Part II). For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 15*.

9. *Recognizes* that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, having a comparative advantage in tackling trade-related development issues, should continue to facilitate the integration of developing countries and countries with economies in transition into the international trading system, in a complementary manner with the World Trade Organization, and to promote development through trade and investment in cooperation and coordination with the International Trade Centre, relevant institutions of the United Nations system and other international organizations;

10. *Requests* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue, on the basis of the outcome of its ninth session, to identify and analyse the implications for development of issues relevant to investment, taking into account the interests of developing countries and bearing in mind the work undertaken by other organizations;

11. *Invites* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue, *inter alia*, to follow developments in the international trading system, in particular their implications for developing countries, to identify new opportunities arising from the implementation of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations agreements,[5] and to assist developing countries to participate effectively in multilateral trade negotiations;

II

12. *Welcomes* the outcome of the first Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held at Singapore from 9 to 13 December 1996, and its adoption of the Plan of Action for the Least Developed Countries;

13. *Also welcomes* the announcements by some developed and developing countries, at the High-level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development, of new or additional measures on market access for the least developed countries, and recommends that a full report on the outcome of and follow-up to the Meeting be submitted to the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization in May 1998;

14. *Recognizes* the importance of open regional economic integration in the creation of new opportunities for expanding trade and investment, and stresses the importance of those initiatives being in conformity with World Trade Organization rules, where applicable;

15. *Stresses* that, in the context of globalization and liberalization, there is need for the full integration of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and of countries with economies in transition, into the world economy, through, *inter alia*, improved market access for their exports, in accordance with the multilateral trade agreements;

16. *Also stresses* in this context the need for various measures to be taken by the international community, including increased trade-related technical assistance and human and institutional capacity-building for strengthening the supply capacity of exportable goods and services of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, with a view to their full integration into the world economy;

17. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the recognition that the movement in the direction of greater openness for developing economies should be an orderly process backed by effective policies at the international and

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[5] See *Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994* (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).

national levels and that those policies should entail a phased approach to integration, taking into account the circumstances of individual countries;[6]

18. *Reiterates* the importance of trade liberalization in developed and developing countries and the need to continue liberalization, particularly in areas of interest to developing countries, through, *inter alia*, a substantial reduction of tariff and other barriers, and also reiterates the need for the elimination of discriminatory and protectionist practices in international trade relations, which will have the effect of improving access for the exports of developing countries, enhancing the competitiveness of their domestic industries and facilitating structural adjustment among developed economies;

19. *Stresses* that all members of the World Trade Organization should implement their commitments in respect of the Uruguay Round agreements in a full, timely, faithful and continuous manner and that all provisions of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations[5] should be applied effectively, taking into account the specific interests of developing countries, so as to maximize economic growth and the developmental benefits for all and, in this respect, reiterates the need for the full implementation of special and preferential treatment for developing countries in accordance with the Uruguay Round agreements;

20. *Emphasizes* the importance of the strengthening of, and the attainment of greater universality by, the international trading system and of accelerating the process directed towards accession to the World Trade Organization of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and emphasizes the necessity for Governments members of the World Trade Organization and relevant international organizations to assist non-members of the World Trade Organization so as to facilitate their efforts, with respect to accession, in an expeditious and transparent manner on the basis of World Trade Organization rights and obligations, and for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to provide technical assistance, within its mandate, thereby contributing to their rapid and full integration into the multilateral trading system;

21. *Also emphasizes* that the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization is a key element with regard to the integrity and credibility of the multilateral trading system and the full realization of the benefits anticipated from the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations;

22. *Deplores* any attempt to bypass or undermine multilaterally agreed procedures on the conduct of international trade by resorting to unilateral actions over and above those agreed in the Uruguay Round, and affirms that environmental and social concerns should not be used for protectionist purposes;

III

23. *Emphasizes* the need for a balanced and integrated approach to issues of environment, trade and development, and recognizes that the objective of Governments should be to ensure that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive so as to achieve sustainable development and that, in doing so, their environmental policies and measures with a potential trade impact are not used for protectionist purposes;

24. *Encourages* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue its work on trade, environment and development, in particular its special role in promoting the integration of trade, environment and development,[7] by examining trade and environmental issues from a development perspective in cooperation with relevant bodies and international organizations, including the Commission on Sustainable

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[6] A/52/15 (Part II), chap. I, sect. B, agreed conclusions 440 (XLIV), para. 8. For the final text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3*.

[7] See resolution 50/95, para. 27.

Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Trade Organization, as task manager for the Commission on Sustainable Development;

IV

25. *Reaffirms* the need to give priority to the problems facing the least developed countries, and reaffirms in particular that actions should be taken, as appropriate, to assist the least developed countries to maximize the potential opportunities and minimize the possible difficulties arising from the Uruguay Round agreements;

26. *Urges* Governments and concerned international organizations to implement fully and expeditiously the Ministerial Decision on Measures in Favour of the Least Developed Countries[5] and to apply effectively the Ministerial Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least Developed and Net Food-importing Developing Countries,[5] as well as the recommendations adopted at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s[8] and at the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, as they relate to trade and trade-related issues of concern to the least developed countries;

27. *Requests* Governments, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to take concrete measures to implement fully and as a matter of urgency the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,[9] including the measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review, especially those related to trade and development;

28. *Welcomes* the adoption of an integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance at the High-level Meeting on Integrated Initiatives for Least Developed Countries' Trade Development, convened by the World Trade Organization at Geneva on 27 and 28 October 1997, and invites the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to enhance further the effectiveness and efficiency of its trade-related technical assistance activities for the least developed countries in collaboration with the World Trade Organization, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund;

29. *Invites* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme to improve collaboration between the country-level programmes of the Conference for the least developed countries and the overall macroeconomic and sectoral policy dialogue in respect of those countries at the World Bank Consultative Group and United Nations Development Programme round-table meetings, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995;

30. *Stresses* the need to give special attention, within the context of international cooperation on trade and development issues, to the implementation of the many international development commitments geared to meeting the special development needs and problems of small island developing States and of landlocked developing States, and to recognize that developing countries that provide transit services need adequate support in maintaining and improving their transit infrastructure;

31. *Invites* preference-giving countries to continue to improve and renew their Generalized System of Preferences schemes in keeping with the post-Uruguay Round trading system and with the objective of integrating developing countries, especially the least developed countries, into the international trading system,

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[8] See A/50/745.

[9] Resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II.

and stresses that ways and means should be found to ensure more effective utilization of those schemes, particularly by the least developed countries;

32. *Notes* the concern among the beneficiaries that the enlargement of the scope of the Generalized System of Preferences, by linking eligibility to non-trade considerations, may detract value from its original principles, namely, non-discrimination, universality, burden sharing and non-reciprocity;

33. *Stresses* the need for increased and more effective participation by developing countries in rule-making and standard-setting activities in the context of the international trading system;

34. *Welcomes* the successful outcome of the South-South Conference on Trade, Investment and Finance, held at San José, Costa Rica, from 13 to 15 January 1997, and stresses the need by all concerned to ensure, with the support of the international community, effective follow-up to its Declaration and Plan of Action[10] which recognized, *inter alia*, the importance of international trade as an unprecedented engine of growth for developing countries, the opportunities and challenges of globalization and liberalization, the need for the complete integration of the developing countries into the world economy and the international trading system, and the need to address the continued marginalization of the least developed countries in the world economy;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on recommendations for effective follow-up to the relevant sections of agreed conclusions 1997/1 of the Economic and Social Council;[1]

36. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to report orally to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution, including developments in the multilateral trading system.

77th plenary meeting
18 December 1997

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[10] A/C.2/52/8, annex.